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Assessment of knowledge of practice and awareness about menstrual hygiene in school going adolescent girl's Wanaparthy district

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Abstract

Lack of menstrual knowledge is one of the commonest factor among adolescence girls. Menstrual hygiene is related to sanitation and hygienic facilities among different areas. Adolescent girls do not have adequate knowledge about reproductive tract infections and it's consequences due to this unhygienic practices during menstruation. After this study it is known that in an early age the mother and teachers should discuss about the menarche and the process of menstruation and hygienic practices followed during menstruation. So that the girls don't feel any embarrassment or shame about the menstruation.

Keywords: Adequate knowledge, embarrassment, menstruation

Introduction

Menstrual hygiene and management have gained global attention and recognized as public health topic ^[13]. These challenges are related to inadequate knowledge and insufficient water, sanitation and hygiene facilities ^[14]. The lack of these facilities can negatively affect education, employment, health and psychosocial outcomes ^[15]. Adolescent girls in low and middle income countries often uninformed about menarche, so this lead to misconceptions and unhygienic practices during menstruation ^[6]. They tend to miss school and avoid social interaction. Poor knowledge and practices of menstruation are not only key importance to girl's education but also to self-confidence and personal development ^[5].

Aim

To study menstrual hygiene, practice among adolescent school going girls and awareness about menstrual hygiene and its management.

Objective

The objective of the study is to bring awareness about menstrual hygiene and its management among adolescent school girls.

Materials and Methods

Study Setting

A detailed study based on knowledge and practice during menstruation is assessed by means of self-framed questionnaire. Subjects are taken from authorized school in Wanaparthy District, Telangana state.

Study will be conducted in authorized school in Wanaparthy District, Telangana state. Based on below mentioned questionnaire.

Study design

Observational study.

Sample size

Total 100 population is selected of school going adolescent girls (above 10 years of Age).

Questionnaire

Name: Class: Age

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1. When did you get your first menses? (at which age)	2. Do you have awareness about menses prior to your first period? Yes/No
3. Source of information about menses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mother Others ▪ Sister ▪ Teachers ▪ Friends 5. From which organ the menses come? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Urethra ▪ Vagina ▪ Uterus ▪ Don't know 	4. Causes of menses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physical process ▪ Curse of God ▪ Don't know 6. How many days you have flow during menses? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3 Days ▪ 4 Days ▪ 5 Days ▪ 6 Days ▪ More than 7 days
7. What do you use during menses? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Old cloth ▪ New cloth ▪ Pad ▪ Others 	8. How often you usually change the Cloth/pad per day? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Every 2 Hrs. ▪ 3 Hrs. ▪ 4 Hrs. ▪ 5 Hrs. ▪ More than 6 Hrs.
9. Do you come to school during menses? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes ▪ No 	10. What are the activities forbidden During menses? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not to perform religious activities. ▪ Not allowed to cook. ▪ Not to eat certain foods. ▪ None of the above.
11. Where do you dispose your cloth/Pads? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In dustbins. ▪ Open places. ▪ Disposed inside the toilet pan. 	12. How do you dispose your Cloth/pad? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ By wrapping in paper. ▪ By burning the cloth/pad. ▪ In open places.
13. Will you wash your hands after disposing cloth/pad? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes ▪ No 	14. After urination how you will wash your private part? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Front to back ▪ Back to front
15. Do you have rash/itching after using the cloth/pad? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes/No 	16. Do you think menstrual problems interfere with school performance? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes/No

Selection of tool

Pre-questionnaire is given to the students before awareness programme and data is collected. Post-questionnaire is given to the students after awareness programme and data is collected and analyzed accordingly.

Inclusion criteria

Age between 10-16 years school going girls. All adolescent girls.

Exclusion criteria

Age below 10 years and above 16 years are excluded. Mentally disabled girls are excluded.

Outcome assessment

Assessment will be done by the pre and post self-framed questionnaire and post data collection analyzation will be done by means of chi square test.

Statistical analysis

Chi Square Test is performed once the pre and post data is collected.

Ethical issues

Ethical clearance will be obtained from the School authorities. Girls will be explained about the questionnaire in their own local language& verbal consent will be obtained.

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of Respondents

S. No.	Variables (Age)	Frequency n=100	Percent
1.	10- 12 years	38	38%
2.	13-14 years	43	43%
3.	15-16 years	29	29%

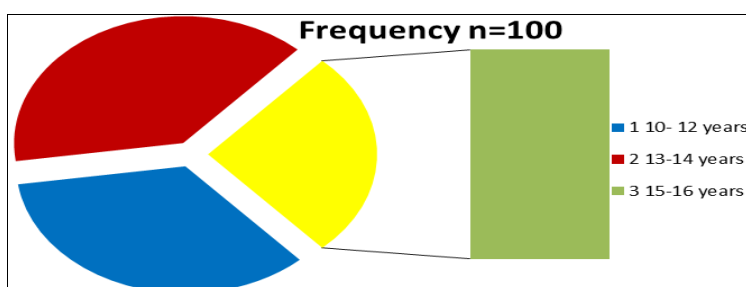


Fig 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of Respondents

Knowledge of respondents on menstruation and menstrual hygiene

Out of the 100 respondents 43% belong to the age group between 13-14 years, 38% belongs to age group between 10-12years and 29% belongs to the age group between 15-16years. In our study most of the respondents were given well awareness regarding the menstrual hygiene during the survey.

Attitude of menstruation and menstrual hygiene

According to our study 90% of school going girls had awareness regarding the menstruation. 74% of respondents had the source of information from Mother. Majority of the respondents 38% had menstrual flow for 7days. Abdominal pains and anorexia were the major symptoms experienced during menstruation among the respondents.

Table 2: Knowledge of respondents on menstruation

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Awareness about menses prior to the first period		
Yes	90	90
No	10	10
Source of information about menses		
Mother	74	74
Sister	10	10
Teachers	11	11
Friends	5	5
Others	0	0
Causes of menses		
Physical process	29	29
Curse of God	23	23
Don't know	48	48
From which organ menses come		
Uterus	32	32
Vagina	39	39
Urethra	8	8
Don't know	21	21
How many days flow is seen during menses		
3	0	
4	0	
5	22	22
6	21	21
7	38	38
More than 7 days	19	19

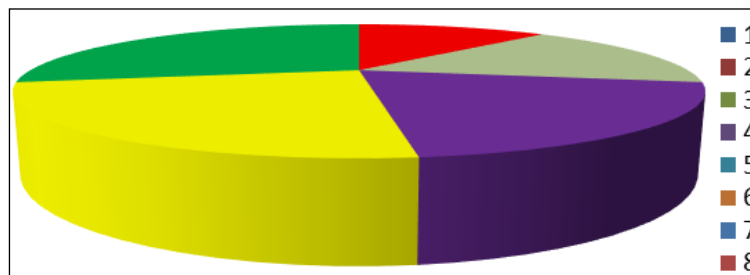


Fig 2: Knowledge of respondents on menstruation

More than 72% of the respondents attended school during their menstruation. Most of them of around 81% believe that religious activities are forbidden during menses. 72% of

respondents have disturbance in their daily routine school schedule during menses.

Table 3: Attitude on menstruation and menstrual hygiene

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Do you come to school during menses?		
Yes	72	72
No	28	28
Activities forbidden during menses		
Not to perform religious activities	81	81
Not allowed to cook	22	22
Not to eat certain foods	30	30
None of the above	2	2
Menstrual problem interfere with school performance		
Yes	72	72
No	28	28

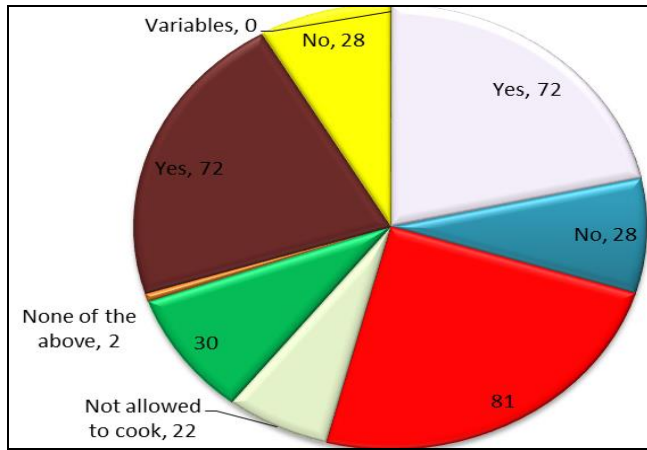


Fig 3: Attitude on menstruation and menstrual hygiene

Practice and hygiene during menstruation

About 61% of respondents used rag and cloth as their absorbent material during menses while only 39% used sanitary pad. Only 23% of respondents changed the absorbent material for every 5 hrs. During menses and 68 percent changed the materials three to four times a day. Some of the Respondents 26% disposed the used absorbent material in the toilet while 43% disposed their pad in dustbins. Only 39% wrap the used pad before disposing it. Majority of the respondents 54% clean their genitalia from front to back during the period of menstruation. 46% of girls from back to front. Majority of the respondents had rash after using pad while 38% people don't have any rash after using absorbents.

Table 4: Practice and hygiene during menstruation

Variables	Frequency	Percent
What do you use during menses?		
Old cloth	44	44
New cloth	17	17
Pad	39	39
Other	0	0
How often change the cloth/pad		
Every 2hrs	0	0
3hrs	0	0
4hrs	0	0
5hrs	23	23
More than 6hrs	68	68
Where do they dispose cloth/pads		
In dustbins	43	43
Open places	31	31
Disposed inside the toilet pan	26	26
How they dispose cloth/pad		
By wrapping in paper	39	39
By burning the cloth/pad	26	26
In open places	35	35
Washing hands after disposing		
Yes	45	45
No	55	55
After urination how you will wash the private part		
Front to back	54	54
Back to front	46	46
Do you have rash/itching after using cloth/pad		
Yes	62	62
No	38	38

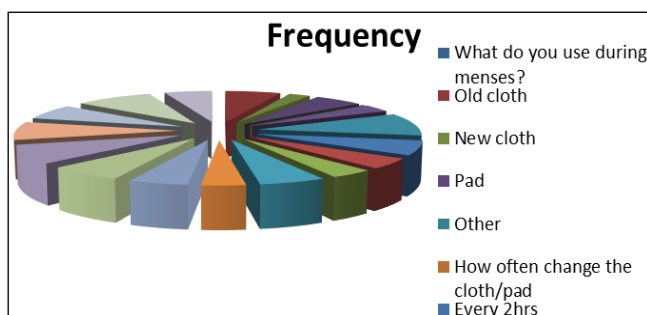


Fig 4: Practice and hygiene during menstruation

Post questionnaire results

After completing the pre questionnaire test, awareness was given to the students about menstruation, process of menstruation, menstrual management and hygienic practices that should be followed during menstruation. Knowledge on menstrual absorbents and their use & the disposing methods were also discussed. The consequences of poor hygienic practices during menstruation, the social taboos, misconceptions regarding menstruation and the diet that should be taken during menstruation and the hygienic practices to avoid menstrual complaints was also discussed. After these awareness programme post questionnaire is given to the female students and the data is collected.

Table 5: Post questionnaire data after awareness programme

Causes of menses		
Physical process	72	72
Curse of God	10	10
Don't know	18	18
From which organ menses come		
Uterus	90	90
Vagina	9	9
Urethra	1	1
Don't know	0	0
What do you use during menses?		
Old cloth	10	10
New cloth	14	14
Pad	78	78
Others		
How often change the cloth/pad		
Every 2hrs	0	0
3hrs	0	0
4hrs	13	13
5hrs	66	66
More than 6hrs	21	21
Where do they dispose cloth/pads		
In the dustbins	100	100
Open places	0	0
Inside the toilet pans	0	0
How they dispose cloth/pad		
By wrapping in the paper	86	86
By burning the cloth or pad	14	14
In open places	0	0
Washing hands after disposing		
Yes	96	96
No	4	4
After urination how you will wash the private part		
Front to back	92	92
Back to front	8	8

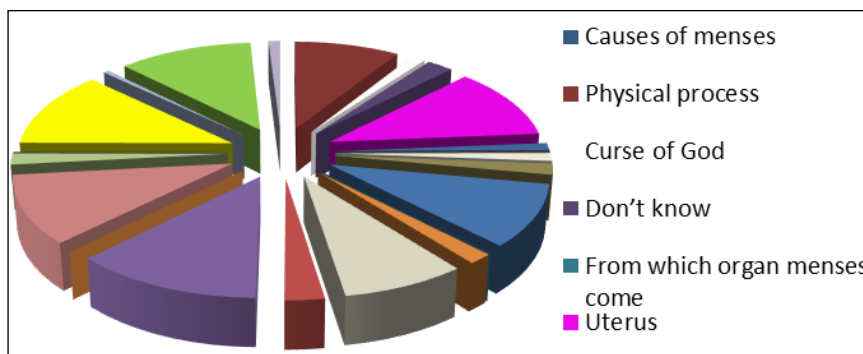


Fig 5: Post questionnaire data after awareness programme

Table 6: Difference between the pre and post-tests by using Chi square test with SPSS Software

S. No.	Responses	Pretest (n=100)	Posttest (n=100)	Chi square value	P value	Statistical significance
1.	Causes of menses			37.06	<0.001	Significant $p < .05$
	Physical process	29	72			
	Curse of god	23	10			
2.	From which organ Menses comes			72.77	<0.001	Significant $p < .05$
	Uterus	32	90			
	Vagina	39	9			
	Urethra	8	1			
3.	What do you use during menses			34.68	<0.001	Significant $p < .05$
	Old cloth	44	10			
	New cloth	17	14			
	Pad	39	78			
	Others	0	0			

4.	How often change the cloth or pad						
	Every 2hrs	0	0	58.3	<0.001	Significant $p<.05$	
	Every 3hrs	0	0				
	4hrs	0	13				
	5hrs	23	66				
	More than 6hrs	68	21				
5.	Where do they dispose cloth or pad						
	Dust bins	43	100	79.72	<0.001	Significant $p<.05$	
	Open places	31	0				
	Toilet pans	26	0				
6.	How they dispose cloth or pad						
	Wrapping	39	86	56.27	<0.001	Significant $p<.05$	
	Burning	26	14				
	Open places	35	0				
7.	Washing hands after disposal						
	Yes	45	96	62.53	<0.001	Significant $p<.05$	
	no	55	4				
8.	After urination how will they wash their private parts						
	Front to back	54	92	36.63	<0.001	Significant $p<.05$	
	Back to front	46	8				

Discussion

In my study Table 6 shows the difference between the pre-test and post-test by using Chi square test with SPSS Software. P value for question no.1 to 8 is statistically significant which provides the role of information in campaigning.

Accurate information regarding menstruation and Menstrual hygiene is important for girls and women to manage their periods. In this study it is found that majority of girls had awareness about menstruation prior to their first periods which is in line with other previous studies. In this study it is also known that mother was main source of information regarding menses which is common in many studies. It also concluded that even though the girls had awareness about menses before their first period many of them had poor knowledge about how to manage their periods. Majority of girls used cloth as their menstrual absorbent, this is because they are unable to afford the cost of sanitary pads. Many previous studies concluded that genital hygiene practices are poor among girls, in this study also it is known that many girls had poor knowledge on maintaining hygiene during their menstruation like washing their private part, washing hands after disposing their pads/cloth which lead to many serious Gynaecological problems. In this study majority of girls had itching/rash after menstruation due to poor hygienic practices like not changing their absorbent for many hours. So from this study it is known that intervention is needed to be done frequently by school teachers to the students about menstruation and it's hygienic practices in order to prevent from infections. Parents should also be included in this programs in order to avoid misconceptions regarding menstruation.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the knowledge and practice of menstruation and menstrual hygiene is low among school going girls. Menstrual hygiene is an issue that need to be intervened at all levels. A variety of factors are known to effect menstrual behaviour among them one is being economic status. Awareness regarding the need for information on healthy menstrual practices is very important. Most of the people have knowledge about menstrual hygiene practices but will not clearly follow and practice. So that behaviour change programs should be

conducted frequently by teachers in schools about the use of absorbents, disposal of absorbents and hygienic practices during menstruation. And in this study it is revealed that majority of girls received their knowledge of menses from their mother before menarche. So the fact is mother plays an important role to educate them and for future generations. Hence counseling programs for parents are also equally important to get awareness to the girls prior to menstruation.

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